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PRESS RELEASE

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Law Enforcement Officers receive Crisis Intervention Training

(Charleston County, S.C.) Last week, deputies from Charleston County Sheriff's Office and officers from Charleston and North Charleston Police Departments participated in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training. This training is dedicated to improving the interactions between law enforcement and people experiencing a mental health crisis. The training was hosted by the Charleston County Sheriff's Office at the law Enforcement Center on Leeds Avenue.

In 1988, police, the National Alliance of Mental Illness, the University Of Tennessee Medical School and the University of Memphis collaborated to improve police training in response to mental illness. Since then, statistics show that injuries to officers, SWAT team involvement involving people with mental illness and the amount of time officers spend on the disposition of mental disturbance calls have decreased. The program has also proven to be more effective at meeting the needs of people with mental illness, keeping them out of jail and getting them into the treatment that they need. CIT provides the training officers need to prepare them for interactions with people with mental illnesses.

Thanks to the generosity of NAMI, this 40-hour program not only trained twenty-three local law enforcement officers and mental health workers, but also prepared fifteen students as instructors for future classes. These new instructors are an asset to the Lowcountry as they can now provide this invaluable training to officers across South Carolina.

For more information, please visit www.nami.org.

